

REMARKS

Reconsideration and allowance of the subject application in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks is respectfully requested.

By this Amendment, claim 19 is amended, and claim 24 is canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. Accordingly, claims 19 and 22-23 are pending in this application.

Rejections Under 35 USC 102

In response to the rejection of claim 19 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over Noguchi et al. (US 2002/0117392), the claims are amended and believed to be patentable for the reasons discussed below.

A rejection based on 35 U.S.C. §102 requires every element of the claim to be included in the reference, either directly or inherently.

As amended, claim 19 recites, *inter alia*:

an oxidizing reagent adding unit for adding an oxidizing reagent in the wastewater treatment bath, a pH of the wastewater treatment bath being within a range from 7 to 12 based upon an alkaline reagent;

and

an acid treatment bath having an acid adding unit for adding acid, the acid treatment bath provided on a downstream side of the wastewater treatment bath and on an upstream side of the ultraviolet treatment unit, wherein the acid treatment bath has a pH within a range of 2 to 4.

(Emphasis added).

Applicants respectfully submit that nowhere does Noguchi disclose, teach, or suggest, the above highlighted features of amended claim 19.

Claim 19 relates to an embodiment that makes the wastewater treatment bath 12 an alkaline solution, wherein persistent substances in the wastewater are treated with an oxidizing reagent, and subsequently, the persistent substances are treated with an acidic reagent under an acidic condition in an acid treatment bath having a PH of 2-4. Therefore, in a case of the COD, i.e., persistent

substances, being thiosulfuric acid, the thiosulfuric acid is treated with, for example, a bath have a PH of 2-3. Accordingly, the thiosulfuric acid is processed completely into sulfate ions even if thiosulfuric acid decomposes down to its intermediate and it does not further decompose under alkaline conditions. Support for the amendment to claim 19 can be found in at least paragraph [0037] of the originally filed specification.

Accordingly, because Noguchi does not disclose, teach or suggest each and every feature recited in claim 19, Applicants' recited feature distinguishes the claimed wastewater treatment apparatus over Noguchi and therefore amended independent claim 19 is patentable over Noguchi.

Rejections Under 35 USC 103

Claims 22-24 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as anticipated by, or in the alternative, under 103(a) as obvious over Noguchi. As presented above, the subject matter of claim 24 is incorporated in claim 19, and claim 24 is herewith canceled.

Still further, as presented above, interdependent claim 19 is patentable over Noguchi. Claims 22-23 depend from independent claim 19 and are likewise patentable over Noguchi at least for their dependence on an allowable base claim, as well as for additional features they recite. Withdrawal of the rejection over Noguchi is respectfully requested.

Conclusion

All objections and rejections having been addressed, it is respectfully submitted that the present application should be in condition for allowance and a Notice to that effect is earnestly solicited.

The Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned attorney of record, to facilitate advancement of the present application.

To the extent necessary, a petition for an extension of time under 37 C.F.R. 1.136 is hereby made. Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, including extension of time fees, to Deposit Account 07-1337 and please credit any excess fees to such deposit account.

Respectfully submitted,

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